

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001a. memo	To President Clinton from Benjamin Barber re: summitt (4 pages)	02/26/97	P5
001b. memo	To Sylvia Matthews, Don Baer, Steve Silverman from Benjamin Barber (5 pages)	03/19/97	P5 2042
001c. speech	Speech draft (2 pages)	nd	P5

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
Speechwriting
Terry Edmonds
OA/Box Number: 10986

FOLDER TITLE:

Summit on America's Future Philadelphia, PA [9]

Rhonda Young
2006-0462-F
ry1073

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

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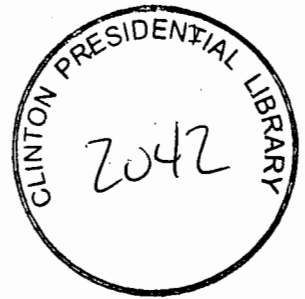
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- PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).
- RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Second Memorandum on the Summit

To: Sylvia Mathews, Don Baer, Steve Silverman
From: Benjamin Barber
Date: March 19, 1997



I believe we made a good start yesterday in recapturing momentum on the Summit, but obviously there is a great deal to do and little time in which to do it. Reviewing the meeting, there seemed to be agreement on these points:

1. We need to take maximum advantage of the run-up to the Summit and push the President's strong vision of service as citizenship and government as a partner of service organizations in every venue possible.

2. We need to focus the President's message before, during and after the Summit and if possible dramatize it with action proposals that move beyond talk and give us a program coming out of the Summit.

3. At the Summit itself, we need to 'dilute' the force of a triangle of persons of whom, with Bush and Powell, President Clinton is only one, by adding powerful voices to the weekend, and by giving Americorps programs a key role in the weekend.

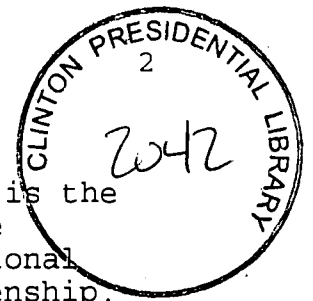
4. We need to emerge from the Summit with a strong service message and new policies and/or programs or newly publicized older programs that will keep the nation's attention focused on the Administration's service philosophy.

In this memo, I will offer specific suggestions in each of these categories. I am also preparing a short paper that offers language and ideas that may help frame the critical differences between the Clinton philosophy of service and its rivals which I will send next week.

1. BEFORE THE SUMMIT:

March 27: the Corporation/Elks funded high school seniors event in Maryland. Can be used to highlight the partnership idea. This is a model of the Corporation, which always acts WITH local partners. There is a program out of HUD that has 40 million dollars for university/school partnerships in urban areas; it seems to be one natural focus for this event. In general we need to ferret out all key Administration programs that involve federal cabinet departments and agencies in partnership with local government and not-for profit private sector agencies. It might be worth putting someone on this specific task so the President has plenty of examples of current on-line partnership programs that show government at its best as a partner of citizens engaged in service.

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April 5: radio address; as Don made clear, this is the obvious moment both to offer a clear statement of the President's service philosophy and to talk about National Volunteers Week in the language of service and citizenship. Although we talked about an alternative "National Service Week," given the lack of time and the 'me-too' quality of such a move, it probably makes more sense to 'colonize' volunteers week and transform it into something more like citizenship week. The language I'm sending later may help.

This address might be broadcast from a more appropriate venue than the White House: say an Americorps site in the Baltimore/DC/Virginia neighborhood; or go to Philadelphia (Independence Hall?) to get a jump on the Summit and talk about the relationship between the Declaration of Independence and Citizen Service.

April 13-20: National Volunteers Week. In addition to framing this signature volunteer week during the radio address, we need an event (or several events) that dramatize OUR version of what the week is about. One excellent possibility that I learned about after our meeting:

On April 16-17, the Council of Jewish Federations will convene in Washington, bringing together hundreds of leaders representing the 174 local Federations that sponsor volunteer and charitable programs in over 800 localities throughout the country. The CJF is an ideal organization to highlight the President's commitment to genuine partnership since it champions partnership and is opposed to volunteerism as a surrogate for government or as a club to bash federal programs. (It has also been disturbed about Administration welfare and immigration policies and this would be an opportunity for the President to reassure them that volunteerism was not a substitute for an ongoing government presence in dealing with some of the untoward the consequences of welfare reform.)

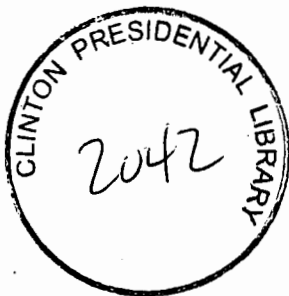
April ?: Netday. The President's initiative re hardwiring the schools is another strong example of partnership. Since the companies that originally pledged support have been backing off of the large financial commitment involved (several billion dollars), this might be a good moment to pressure them to recommit. Appear WITH a committed TECH company CEO at a school to dramatize public/private cooperation around education. Also: How about pledging the dollars to be harvested from selling the new digitalized broadcast spectra (five or six new channels per traditional spectrum!) to education? [there is still debate about whether to auction the spectra or turn them over free in return for pledges of more "public interest" broadcasting; I'm on the auction side of the debate, and this would be a good way to play such a positive decision.

2. THE MESSAGE: The radio address, the Summit speech, the Declaration of Commitments (CAN WE GET AN IDEA OF WHAT IT IS LIKELY TO LOOK LIKE FROM HARRIS!?) and the other service-related events all offer opportunities to sharpen the President's service message and gently distinguish his view of service as a road to citizenship and government as a partner of service organizations from its conservative rival (service as an entirely private sector and personal form of philanthropy, government as superfluous, as an 'enemy' of volunteers that gets in the way of solving social problems). In this sense, the debate over service and voluntarism rehearses the more fundamental debate about the role of government in our democracy. The President looks to service as a way to revitalize democracy and give governance back to its rightful owners -- including citizens in democratic self-governance -- not to privatize its functions or dump its burdens into the laps of stressed private charities. Its outcome may shape the second term philosophy of governance. (See appendix below for more on language and concepts).

Ideally, we need to make the philosophy CONCRETE via specific policies, proposals and institutions that show and embody the message. Some ideas:

- * Formalize the 40,000 member Americorps alumni group and give it a specific goal/task (enrolling others in Americorps; doing voter registration and citizen education among the young; acting as emissaries and tutors to immigrants seeking citizenship)
- * Focus on the military as a citizen service organization; announce a recruitment campaign rooted in service not just skills acquisition; give General Powell a service award in recognition of his military service as a form of devoted citizenship.
- * Highlight existing federal programs that feature strong government/volunteer relationships; this requires some fast research. Why invent new programs where many are already underway, but unknown to the general public cynical about government (e.g., the university/school urban partnership program under HUD)?
- * A dramatic new program that is inexpensive but defining of the President's service philosophy (it can be an idea announced in seedling form at the summit, developed in detail later)

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3. THE SUMMIT:

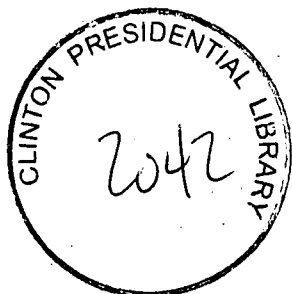
* THE PRESIDENT'S APPEARANCE: The White House should bargain for an appearance by the President that concludes and climaxes the weekend. It should be separated in some way from all the other talks. His should not just be one of a string of speeches, but free-standing, with its own introduction (by an exemplary Americorps member who can briefly tell his/her story of how service turned him/her from a private volunteer into a responsible citizen?) Before the intro, drop something -- a film clip of an Americorps project, a quick song performance by an Americorps group.

The substance of his talk should leave room to respond spontaneously to what comes before -- not to contradict but to gently correct and redirect what has been said. e.g., if Bush and Powell have talked about private voluntarism: "Yes, voluntarism is the beginning of civic life in America and our most precious resource. But we must not stop with volunteers: for volunteers need to become permanent community service participants, and community service needs to become a school of citizenship so that Americans can feel that this democracy belongs to them." And if they focus on "heros," he can say: "Of course we need heros, but in a democracy the real heros are ordinary citizens who do the heavy lifting of a free society. It has been said, 'pity the country that has no heros,' but we need to say also, 'pity the country that needs heros too much.'"

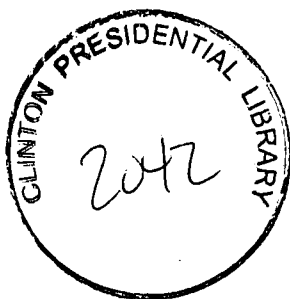
We may want also to think about a second and different kind of appearance for the President, especially if he plans to be at the Summit on Sunday. He could join an Americorps unit in action in an adult literacy class (where his leg wouldn't be a problem). That is, leave the podium and demonstrate his commitment by doing and not just talking.

* Other speakers: in order to create the sense of a Summit that is not just about THREE LEADERS (Clinton, Bush, Powell) where Clinton is but the first among equals, but rather about THE PRESIDENT and COMPANY, the White House should try to expand the roster of powerful voices participating in the weekend. In addition to trying to get President Carter to attend, and giving Cisneros a highly visible role during the weekend, here are additional persons who could make a contribution and who could be counted on to speak from a civic perspective not hostile to government:

General McCaffrey: a great way to offer a counter-balance to General Powell
 Millard Fuller, Habitat for Humanity head
 (might help get Carter on board)
 Bishop John Adams, who presides over the Black Bishops Association
 George Soros, who has been a model philanthropist



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and a believer in "civil society," in Eastern Europe and America

Andy Young, currently heading up Kellogg's African-American Men and Boys Project

Bill Gray, now heading United Negro College Fund
 Chuck Supple, who was a VP of the Thousand Points of Light Foundation and now heads PUBLIC ALLIES, where one of the most successful Learn and Serve programs is located.

Eli Segal as ex-Corporation CEO (how about giving him a service award?)

Edgar Beckham (Ford Foundation VP and head of the UNCF program on education-based community service)

Yolanda Moses, CCNY President, eloquent African-American spokesperson for service and education (she's invited the President to speak at CCNY graduation later this spring -- a good opportunity for follow-up!)

Felix Rohatyn, a powerful voice for private sector public goods.

* THE DECLARATION OF COMMITMENTS: We need to draft our own version before we get a Powell version to which we can only say yes or no. Our negotiating position will be stronger if we have our own document on the table.

* Other Activities: The weekend should feature several Americorps programs as examples of how partnership works all the way down; perhaps let a Republican State Governor present his own favorite local Americorps program. Some good programs for such purposes: YOUTHBUILD in Boston; PUBLIC ALLIES, in DC; COMMUNITY WATERWATCH in New Jersey; PARTNERS IN SCHOOL INNOVATION in San Francisco. And of course Philadelphia's best Americorps program.

The Sunday gala shouldn't be a throwaway. How can it be service related? Performers with Peace Corps or Vista backgrounds? 'We are the World' or FarmAid veterans? MTV Rock the Vote types?

4. AFTER THE SUMMIT:

Because General Powell's organization will continue into the future, because the rival visions of service explored here will remain in play, and most of all because the President's service philosophy undergirds his governing philosophy, it is important to develop a strategy that will continue beyond the Summit, and keep the President's service commitments -- especially Americorps and its allied programs, but other programs as well -- alive, active and in the public eye. Planning for the Summit thus needs to be a key part of planning before the Summit.

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ MEMORANDUM

to: PRESIDENT CLINTON

from BENJAMIN BARBER

February 26, 1997

re: Losing Control of The Summit on America's Future

Mr. President: I believe there is a real danger that you may be losing control of the April Summit on Service in Philadelphia; that, despite your crucial commitment to national and community service, the Summit risks becoming a showcase for an ex-President's private philanthropy (non-civic) approach to service and a four year national platform on which a prospective President (General Powell) can run against you and the Vice-President on what should be YOUR issue. In short, what should be a celebration of your courageous leadership on citizenship, government-civil society partnerships and the linkage of democratic education and community service risks being hijacked for purposes unrelated to and potentially at odds with what you stand for.

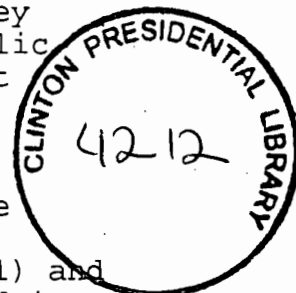
I understand and applaud the spirit of bipartisanship that led to involving President Bush and General Powell, but if the price of their involvement becomes too high, if they take over the Summit and what it stands for in the public eye, it will turn out to be a very bad deal -- not just politically but also in terms of fundamental political philosophy and defining civic ideals.

You took from the Bush Administration the tired private heroes approach to service (Points of Light) that made service an alternative to government (federal and local) and an excuse for government simply to drop out, and turned it into an inspiring civic program for the forging of citizenship in young people, the cultivating of social responsibility among individuals and communities, and the creation of a working partnership both between government and civil society and between education and democracy. In this partnership, individual citizens, communities and states as well as the federal government work as collaborators in bringing civic forces to bear on the solving of community problems. Your vision strengthens rather than undermines confidence in government as a partner of citizens and civic associations in confronting the nation's challenges.

Yet the rhetoric in which the summit is being wrapped (and the way it is being represented in the Press) largely abandons this language in favor of privatistic talk about volunteers, and overly optimistic rhetoric about outcomes, and could leave the public with the impression that you, Bush and Powell are going to turn over the nation's problems

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to private individuals and associations for solution (the Newt Gingrich "let the churches and charities deal with all our social problems" approach.) In light of the pressures on spending from the need to balance the budget, what should be an exercise in civic spirit may be construed as a cynical abnegation of governmental responsibility altogether.

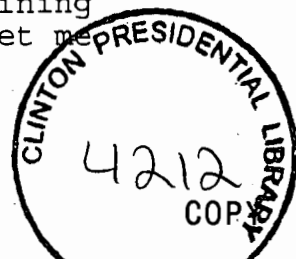
Moreover, the Corporation, which to me is a MODEL of the partnership between the federal government, the states and civil society associations, seems in danger of being treated as a Big Government special interest player at the Summit rather than as the paragon of what a citizenship-grounded service program can be. Commitments by private philanthropies and corporations are being highlighted while the program that has made service a civic ideal for every young American seems marginalized. While it may be imprudent to use the Summit to try to expand Americorps, it seems equally imprudent to hide it or cast it as just one more player. It is a signature accomplishment of the First Term and if the mood of bipartisanship means anything, surely it means you need no longer play down one of your favorite programs for fear of subjecting it to Republican attack.

My concern is not to "politicize" the Summit by putting your political agenda ahead of Bush's or Powell's (though that might not be such a bad idea!) but to make sure that it is not politicized by others and robbed of its role as a showcase for a very special political philosophy in which the linkage between education and service is highlighted and the role of service as a training ground for citizens and not just a substitute for government is emphasized.

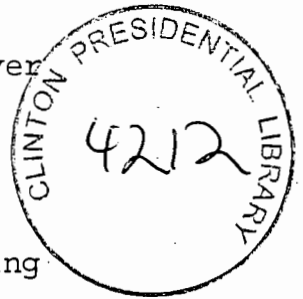
From my meeting with Harris Wofford and Susan Stroud yesterday, I know meetings have already been held with Bruce Reed and that you and the Chief of Staff will be meeting next week with Harris. In the final part of the period leading up to the Summit in April, I believe you need to assure that the Summit once again becomes yours. Because you are the President, anything less will look not like you are modestly counting yourself as primus inter pares but seem like you are weaker than the former President and General Powell. And because you have pioneered a powerful new logic of citizen service and innovated a powerful new instrument for realizing that logic in the real world (the Corporation), it surely must be this logic and this instrument not Colin Powell's Newsweek rhetoric or Ray Chamber's Points of Light talk that are highlighted throughout the weekend.

How service is described, what the cynical press says happened, and who seizes the initiative on what is to be an ongoing program could be one crucial factor in determining the success of your second term. With this in mind, let me

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suggest several ideas that may help reassert control over the runaway Summit:



1. YOUR APPEARANCE(S) need to be special and clearly differentiated from those of the former Presidents and General Powell. They should involve not just cheerleading but a clear enunciation of YOUR CIVIC PHILOSOPHY that distinguishes it (though not offensively) from Points of Light and private philanthropy. They should focus on YOUR PROGRAMS from the Corporation to the Two Years of College commitment and make clear why such programs are central to the service ideal. They must invoke your role as the nation's steward with responsibilities to make government work for everyone (and not just to make everyone work for -- or in place of -- government!)

2. THE CORPORATION and what it stands for need to be central to the rhetoric and activities of the weekend. The last time Americorps was spotlighted was at the Summer of Service where all its birthing difficulties were still in evidence. Now it is strong and resilient and extremely popular in the local communities where it is active. I would look for ways to make outstanding Americorps volunteers and their projects a centerpiece for the weekend. The message should be

"Americorps embodies everything we believe about service, the linkage between education and democratic responsibility, the partnering of federal, state and local resources to make projects work, the impact on community outcomes but also on volunteers. Every American should be a volunteer; every volunteer is a citizen in the making; citizens working together is the key to a robust democracy; government is not the cause but the end product of this process of forging responsible citizens."

3. THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY undergirding YOUR VISION of service needs to trump the rival visions that will come from Bush and Powell and others. For theirs is a vision that sees service as private and philanthropic, as a substitute for government, as a form of personal activity rather than a form of citizen activity. The philanthropic vision can be used to question government service programs: it not only can argue that service does not need Americorps but that it contradicts the underlying assumptions of Americorps. "You can't pay volunteers," they will say. "Why should government organize points of light that organize themselves very well, thank you?" they will insist. "Let charity do all the things government can't and shouldn't -- deal with poverty, homelessness, unemployment, teen pregnancy" they will argue, in the manner of Newt Gingrich's calling for the private sector to act as a substitute for government.

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In short, there ARE real substantive policy implications attached to different articulations of the service ideal, and if the Summit is defined by some one else's rhetoric it can too easily become a weapon against your philosophy of governance -- an not just in the service sector but in other domains too.

Your service ideal as I understand it envisions a PARTNERSHIP between government and the citizens who constitute government's democratic legitimacy, not an abandoning of government in favor of private sector philanthropy. Service hopes for specific community outcomes for children at risk, but it also aspires to change those who serve and turn their season of service into a lifetime of responsible citizenship, forging a stronger more democratic nation better able to meet its national and global responsibilities.

This message has to come through loud and clear -- from your speeches, from the highlighted activities, and from your leadership and your mastery over the spirit of the weekend. If Philadelphia is seen as a Summit on Citizenship and Social Responsibility that vindicates your determination to put democratic education, responsible citizenship and government/civil society partnerships at the core of your Presidency, you will have succeeded. If it is seen as a Summit on Volunteerism or a Summit on How Private Markets Can Solve all our Public Problems or a perfect platform for General Powell to spend four years in the limelight talking about your issues, you will have lost a vital battle over the role of the civil society/government partnership in the American future and, I fear, (forgive my bluntness) will have diminished rather than have enhanced your Presidency.



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